

Title: Under the Mango Trees

EPISODE 3: Dreams and responsibility

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Sc. 1 Morning in the kitchen

List of characters:

- Children in background
- Desirée (f, 16)
- Endurance (m, 13)
- Granma (f, 60+)
- Narrator

Scene 2 At home at Aunty Alice house

List of characters:

- Alice (f, 40+)
- Desirée (f, 16)
- Endurance (m, 13)
- April (f, 39)
- Lorraine (f, 18)
- Eric (f, 18)
- Narrator

INTRO:

Welcome to Learning by Ear and Episode Three of our new 10 – part radio drama series, “Under the Mango Trees”! In today’s episode Desirée finds out more about her mother’s death when she spends an exciting weekend with Lorraine, Lorraine’s twin brother, Eric and their mother, Doctor Alice. Join us now as she battles to convince her Granma that her brother, Endurance, should help out more in the house.

SIG.TUNE UP HOLD UNDER AND FADE

NARRATOR: The mango grove outside the small farmhouse in Mtelera had been planted – one tree at a time - in memory of every man, woman and child who has died in the Okoro family. But there was still plenty of life in Granma Linda’s house. The four small children – Desirée’s and Endurance’s younger cousins - brought laughter to the house again. However, sometimes her cousins drove Desirée crazy. Also she felt her brother Endurance was using the fact that he was a boy to get out of helping in the home.

Sc. 1 Morning in the kitchen

1. **SFX:** Distant cows/ chickens /birds. Cutlery. Sounds of children playing around, coming to the table, eating.

2. DESIRÉE: (angry) Endurance is 13, Granma. It's time he shared some of the household responsibilities.
3. ENDURANCE: I already do! Who herds the cattle every morning at 5? Who, sister dear?
4. DESIRÉE: Yes, while I am doing all the cooking, all the washing and all the ironing. Granma, Lorraine can help me to become a singer. She told me about a big audition coming up. It's a once in a lifetime opportunity.
5. GRANMA: Audition? Singing? Bah! What nonsense is that city girl putting in your head?
6. ENDURANCE: I heard them practicing at school.
(imitating) Oohhh...yeah...
7. DESIRÉE: Granma, don't listen to him! We're good. Singing is something I think I am really good at, and Lorraine has asked me to go over to practice this weekend.

8. GRANMA: And what about all the work here? No! No, Desirée. I can't look after the four children and Endurance on my own all weekend.
9. DESIRÉE: Endurance is old enough to help out. And our sister, Bella, said she would help too if ever we needed her. Look! All I'm asking for is one chance. If it doesn't work out, I won't have lost anything. And if you're worried about school, the auditions are in the holidays.
10. GRANMA: Well, no. I'm thinking that maybe you should leave school altogether. Then, you'd have more time for us all, AND time for your music, if that's what you really want.
11. DESIRÉE: But school is important, and anyway, I might not make it past the audition. I might not be good enough to make it as a singer.
12. ENDURANCE: (sarcastic) That's for sure!

13. DESIRÉE: But I have to find out if that is what I want to do in life. Otherwise it will remain just some wild dream.
14. ENDURANCE: It IS a wild dream, Sister, believe me.
15. DESIRÉE: (angry) Oh, shut up Endurance!
16. GRANMA: Desirée. You apologise immediately. I won't have that kind of language in my house.
17. DESIRÉE: (sarcastic) I'm sorry, Brother.
18. ENDURANCE: No, you're not, otherwise you wouldn't go.
19. DESIRÉE: What is it that I am doing that's so wrong? Am I not allowed to have a life?
20. GRANMA: We are all allowed to, as long as we fulfil our duty to God.

21. ENDURANCE: It's not fair! Who is going to make me my breakfast?
22. DESIRÉE: Like you can't boil up some oats and milk yourself. What are you? A big baby?
23. GRANMA: Enough now, Desirée! Boys are not meant to cook.
24. ENDURANCE: (sticking out tongue) See? Errhhh!
25. DESIRÉE: (frustrated) Some of the best chefs in the world are men.
26. ENDURANCE: Hah, but then they are "chefs" and not "cooks".
27. DESIRÉE: (furious) Endurance! So, men are "chefs" and women are just cooks? Is that what you're saying?
28. GRANMA: Desirée. I said, that's enough! I am ready to compromise. If Bella can come and help

me here, then you may go to Lorraine's for the weekend.

29. DESIRE: (happy) Thank you, Granma Linda!

30. GRANMA: On one condition!

31. DESIRE: Yes?

32. GRANMA: That you take Endurance with you.
Understood?

33. ENDURANCE: (triumphant) YES!

34. DESIRE: groans

NARRATOR: What else could Desirée say? At least her brother would get to see how much Lorraine's twin brother, Eric, helped in the house. She had even seen him do the washing up. But most important of all, it was a chance to ask Aunty Alice some questions about why their mother had died. Why couldn't anyone save her life?

35. **SFX:** Town ambience; traffic; bus; footsteps.

After the long bus ride, Endurance and Desirée arrive in Kentown. Lorraine's mum, Aunty Alice, welcomes them inside.

Scene 2 At home at Aunty Alice house

36. ALICE: (very warm) Hah! Desirée, my dear! And Endurance! Come in! Lorraine and Eric went out about an hour ago. They'll be back any minute now. Can I get you two a drink? Some mango juice?

37. **SFX:** Door shuts. Footsteps on tiles

38. DESIRÉE: Just some water please.

39. ENDURANCE: A mango juice for me, please. With ice!

40. DESIRÉE :(Hissing angrily) Endurance!

41. ALICE: (laughing) The boy knows what he likes! Are you sure you don't want one, Desirée? Go on! Spoil yourself!

42. DESIRÉE: Alright Aunty. Thank you.
43. ENDURANCE: (Sticking tongue out) Err. Copy cat!
44. DESIRÉE: Oh, just be quiet!
45. **SFX:** Tinkling ice cubes in glasses
46. ALICE: (on mic) Here you are. And, are you well?
47. DESIRÉE: (laughing) Well, it was quite difficult to get
permission to come here for the weekend!
48. ENDURANCE: Granma has to look after the four other
children all on her own.
49. ALICE: Four children?
50. DESIRÉE: They are our cousins from Uncle Blessing
and his wife. She died.

51. ALICE: (remembering) Oh I remember! That was so tragic.
So, your Granma took in her brother's four children? Plus you and Endurance, and your sister Bella?
52. DESIRÉE: She left home to go and live with her boyfriend. She wants to study and our house is too hectic. But she stays nearby and has come to help Granma this weekend. There's a lot of work to do on a small holding like ours.
53. ENDURANCE: Yes. I have to get up at 5 every morning to herd the cattle.
54. DESIRÉE: And then he catches up his sleep in school.
55. ENDURANCE: (hissing angrily) No I don't!
56. ALICE: Oh dear! You poor boy. It must be very tiring. How old are you now?

57. ENDURANCE: 13, Aunty.
58. ALICE: Are you really? 13! You won't believe this, Endurance, but I delivered you into this world! And I helped your mother just after the birth of your baby brother, Benedict.
59. ENDURANCE: That's when she died.
60. ALICE: Yes- that's when they both died.
61. DESIRÉE: Why did Mama die, Aunty?
62. ALICE: I think she was just exhausted. Your mother had one baby after another, from when she was 19. And then she got pregnant again. She had tried not to have any more children after you, Endurance. You were her fifth.
63. ENDURANCE: Fifth?

64. DESIRÉE: Yes, Endurance. Mother had had two miscarriages before you were born. But Aunty, why did she have to die?
65. ALICE: Look, a pregnancy is always a risk. It is exhausting pushing a baby out. It can get stuck, or the woman's hips are not wide enough; or she loses too much blood. In your mother's case, the baby was stuck. We couldn't give her a Caesarean, you know, where you cut the stomach open and lift the baby out. She needed to be in a hospital for that. And she wasn't. Kentown General was too far away.
66. DESIRÉE: So you couldn't save her without a Caesarean.
67. ALICE: No! Look - a pregnant mother needs health care before and after giving birth. What we call ante and post natal care where we check her blood pressure, her blood, her weight, and any signs of possible complications. But your mum never came to get checked.

68. **ENDURANCE:** Why not?
69. **ALICE:** Kentown is 20 kilometres away. It cost too
much to travel there. That’s why I’ve been
lobbying the local health minister to open a
community clinic in Mtelera. If only we
had managed to get one before your
mother... oh... but (sighs), there’s no point
in wishing. I’m so sorry!
70. **SFX:** Front door slams
71. **LORRAINE:** (off mic) Halloo. We’re back! Des!
(greeting kisses)
72. **ERIC:** Hi Des! You OK?
73. **DESIRÉE:** (shy) Hallo Eric! I’m fine.
74. **ERIC:** And Endurance! My man!
75. **SFX:** Clap hands as they give each other “Big Five” greeting.

76. ENDURANCE: Hi Boss! Let me see the CD? Rina? Who is she?
77. LORRAINE: She's the new voice from the DRC – she grooves!
78. ERIC: And you can brush up your French at the same time!
79. DESIRÉE: (doubtful) Ok.
80. LORRAINE: Come on, Des! Let's go to my room and listen to the first track and see if we can learn it to sing for Bongo.
81. DESIRÉE: In French? But I can't.
82. LORRAINE: It's three words – "je t'aime"!
83. ERIC: (mimicking) Je t'aime – oooohhhh je t'aime oooooohhh Come on, Endurance! Let's leave the girls to their singing.

84. **SFX:** Eric and Endurance keep mimicking “Je t’aime –
oooohhhh je t’aime oooooohhh ! “ FADE UNDER

85. **LORRAINE:** (off mic) Not like that, you howling hyenas!
We can sing! (on mic) Listen up, Des!
Bongo is expecting us tomorrow at 12.
High Noon! If he likes what we do, he will
recommend us for the pop idol auditions in
Granville! We’ve got to give this thing our
all, girlfriend!

SIG TUNE UP

OUTRO

And that’s all from our today’s third episode of “Under the Mango
Trees” written by Romie Singh. This radio novella highlights how
active family planning can help to improve quality of life and gives
women, and also their partners, the choice of when to have children.
Please join us for Episode Four when Desirée discovers some pills in
Lorraine’s bedroom and Eric discovers an interest in Desirée.

Remember, if you want to hear the programme again or tell friends
about it, please visit our website at: dwworld.de/slash/1be

Goodbye for now.

END OF EPISODE THREE